

**RITUALS AT SITES IN THE 1970S ● DOWSING ●  
HOME SWEET ANCIENT HOME ● CASPN & LAN ●  
FOGOUS & TRANSFORMATION ● MISSING MENHIRS  
\*ALL PHOTOS NOW IN FULL COLOUR\***

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# Meyn Mamvro

## STONES OF OUR MOTHERLAND

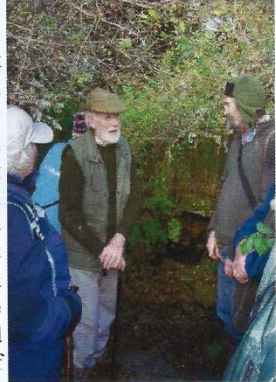
**EARTH ENERGIES \* ANCIENT STONES \* SACRED SITES \* PAGANISM \* LEYPATHS  
CORNISH PRE-HISTORY & CULTURE \* MEGALITHIC MYSTERIES \* LEGENDS & FOLKLORE**

It's quite amazing that some 5000 years after they were first placed in the landscape, megalithic sites continue to be found and identified even today. This MM includes details of several newly-discovered standing stones, one now used as gateposts not far from Madron Baptistry [see p.5], and one on the bank of a hedge that lies on an alignment from the Merry Maidens stone circle [see p.7]. Another one at Rissick, to the north of St.Buryan and south of Crows-an-Wra, has also been discovered - but in this case unfortunately not until it had been uprooted and removed [see p.4]. This latter one is all the more surprising for not having been identified before, despite the wealth of attention standing stones in Cornwall have received over the last 40 or so years from various researchers, not least of which has been *Meyn Mamvro*! But we missed this one, as did everyone else, and our only excuse is that it was not on or near a path to anywhere, except the farm on which it stood. Its removal (by a firm of agricultural contractors) does however highlight a very worrying situation. How can it be that in the early years of the 21st century, when ancient landscapes should be given widespread and comprehensive protection, that a standing stone can be simply removed and/or destroyed, with nobody being informed or consulted? You would think wouldn't you that any farmer or landowner would have a statutory duty to inform the Historic Environment service of Cornwall Council (or any other local authority) if they intended to remove a stone from their land that could be ancient. But apparently not it seems. Some megalithic sites (but not all) are scheduled, but many more are not, largely because they have never been noted by any antiquarian or modern researcher. If a site is scheduled, then any landowner or developer has a statutory obligation to inform the authorities, and by and large the system works well. Interestingly, such a case has recently happened. The developers of a new housing scheme near Fowey, Wainhomes, had to apply to have the Tristan stone moved [see p.4]. The issue has raised a number of concerns, but at least it was given a full airing before English Heritage and Cornwall Council eventually gave qualified permission. By contrast, the 'unknown' standing stone at Rissick in West Penwith was unceremoniously removed and sold on without anyone being informed. Even if the stone has been scheduled, one wonders if the agricultural contractors would have just gone ahead anyway. They can't have known (nor did they enquire) whether it was a scheduled monument or not. A not dissimilar case happened some years ago, when a landowner removed the Eathorne menhir near Gweek, and only replaced it because of pressure from MM readers and others [see MM19 p.3, MM20 p.3 & MM59 p.4]. In this case it is too late to do anything about the Rissick stone, and although its new location has been discovered by MM, it no longer stands where it did.

## DOWSING NEWS



In November 2012, the **West Cornwall Dowisers** attracted over a dozen people on a lovely clear crisp day to *Alsia Well*, courtesy of the owner Trevor Rogers. Trevor took them to the field that had been field-walked in the past and many flints found. Down at the well itself he gave a history of the site and other interesting ideas; then across the stream to an area that he thought had originally been a meeting place. The dowisers did indeed find traces of an original spring around which people had gathered, and themselves naturally formed a circle in this enchanting place. Lunch was taken in Trevor's house that he had built himself from an old Granary Barn, and afterwards everyone dowsed around the place. A possible new Mary line was found as it braided itself around the well and then ran down into the valley of Alsia Mill on its way to St.Buryan. In addition another water line was found travelling through the edge of a barn and down to the well. And finally, traces of six or seven Iron Age hut circles were found in the field above the well.



*Trevor and some of the group at Alsia well*

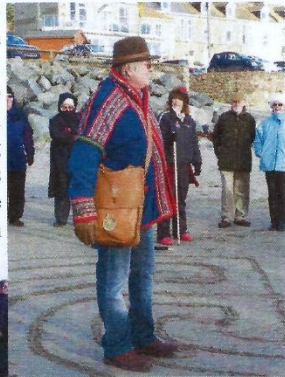
In December, on a bright and blustery day, fourteen **West Cornwall Dowisers** made their way to *Balowall Barrow* near St.Just. This was the first time the group had been there, and they found a number of energy lines through the barrow. Two of these were straight leys: one went from beside the Barrow on to Tregeseal chambered tomb and circle and further sites [c.f *MM1 p.12-13*]. The other newly-identified one ran straight from Cape Cornwall through the



Barrow to Chapel Carn Brea entrance grave, and on to St.Buryan church. Other lines were more meandering, including one strong one from the Longships to the Barrow and on to Tregeseal; one from the Brisons through the Barrow and on to St.Just Church; one from the Scillies to the Barrow and on to Carn Kenidjack; and one from the Barrow itself that ran along the line of coastal barrows to Sennen [see *MM65 p.8-11*]. Many inhumations were dowsed in the Barrow itself, spanning a long period; and an attractive spot was found at the entrance grave, where many of the group collected. Its orientation was SSW, which was just too far south for a winter solstice sunset. After lunch the Group went on to St.Just Church, where they identified the line from the Barrow and found that it went through a former standing stone on the church site and the bell tower of the present Church.

On a very cold but clear day in January, **West Cornwall Dowzers** met up at *Madron Baptistry* to explore the energies at this sacred site. The Apollo Line, which does a dog-leg to this site and back was readily identified, but in addition another strong serpentine line was found, running from Madron Churchyard through the pathway leading to the Baptistry and on through West Lanyon Quoit before turning sharply to go to the logan stone at Zennor. In the Baptistry itself a spiralling energy line with a 'feel-good' factor was found, though the stagnant water lying about the site was felt to be blocking some of the water energy flows. At the other side of the Baptistry going towards Penzance a gatepost was dowsed by Bart as an original standing stone [see p.5 for more details]. In the afternoon the Group moved on to *Madron Church* where they enjoyed more dowsing. The Apollo Line was again identified, running through the old cross in the churchyard and then looping the church before continuing to Gulval Church.

At the beginning of February, **Trencrom Dowzers** organised a talk at Marazion Community Centre with writer and researcher **Sig Lonegren** on *The history, construction and use of labyrinths*. Over 50 people came to hear Sig's interesting and wide-ranging talk, covering all aspects of labyrinths, including making them and moving in and out of them using musical notes, chakras, elements and questions. Afterwards, everyone went down to the nearby beach, where Sig demonstrated creating a labyrinth by dowsing its best location and then making it in the sand. Finally, everyone walked it in a questing and sacred way, rounding off an excellent and unusual event.

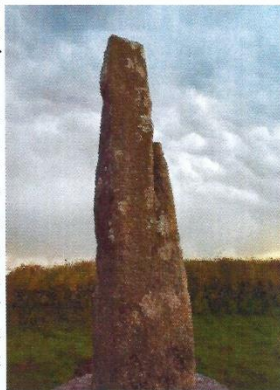


[above] Sig Lonegren on the beach and [left] walking the completed labyrinth.  
Photos [c] Suzie Baker

Later in the month **Tamar Dowzers** presented a talk by David Ward on *Dowsing in Hypnotherapy*, which was followed by another talk at the beginning of March by Richard Dealler on *The Mary/Michael Pilgrim Route*, which his group are in the process of establishing from Cornwall up to Norfolk [see MM80 p.3 for details of the booklet]. This talk was also given to **Trencrom Dowzers** in Marazion on the next weekend. Richard had this to say about his Project: "Our vision resonates with environmental concerns and research which recognises benefits for physical and emotional wellbeing of 'nature cures'. In our restless, noisy society, slowing to the natural rhythm and pace of walking and journeying to and between sacred places can help us reconnect to ourselves and attune more deeply to, as T.S. Elliot described it, 'the still point of the turning world'."

## **NEWSNEWS MOVING MENHIRS NEWSNEWS TRISTAN STONE TO BE MOVED**

A storm has erupted over plans to re-locate the famous Tristan Stone near Fowey in SE Cornwall. At present this 9ft inscribed stone (dedicated to “Tristan, son of Cunomor”) lies beside the A3082 at SX1112 5224. However it has not always stood here: in the 1750s it was at Four Turnings crossroads; 12 years later it was seen lying in a ditch near Newtown until at least 1873, when J.T.Blight saw it set upright. Later it was moved back to Four Turnings, and in 1971 when road widening took place it was moved to its present site. Now Cornwall Council have given permission for an estate of 80 houses to be built on an adjacent site, and it is proposed to move it again further down the road towards Fowey. There was a torrent of protest about this proposal, including some Councillors such as Bert Biscoe who described it as “cultural violence” and “an infringement of the cultural integrity of Cornwall”. However, English Heritage said that, providing that the stone was properly recorded and laser scanned, they would prefer it to be moved than swallowed up by the new estate.



*Storm clouds gather over the  
Tristan Stone  
Photo [c] Alex Langstone*

## **RISSICK STONE UPROOTED AND MOVED**

A standing stone that was unrecorded and unnoticed by all the researchers into West Penwith’s stones (including Vivien Russell, John Barnatt, Robin Payne and *Meyn Mamvro!*) has been uprooted. The stone stood on Trevore Farm at Rissick, just south of Crows-an-Wra [at approx SW3912 2694] and is visible on the latest Google Earth photo. However, following the recent death of the elderly couple who used to own the farm, it was let out to an agricultural firm for potato growing, and the stone disappeared overnight. Local resident Jonathan Burnett reported the loss, and local archaeologist David Giddings spoke to him and learnt that the stone was some 10ft high, so was unlikely to have been a simple rubbing post. It was also aligned to the two Bunkers Hills menhirs [SW4031 2719 & 4041 2721] which themselves were destroyed in 1976, which makes it likely to have been a prehistoric stone. However, following a tip off, MM has discovered the location of the stone, which together with another from the same farm, were sold on to a farmer in St.Buryan, who has erected them as gateposts for future use near Alsia Farm.



*The Rissick stone and companion  
close to Alsia farm near St.Buryan*

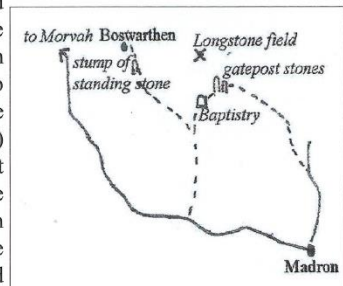
## MISSING MENHIRS - CORNWALL'S LOST STONES

### 10: Boswarthen gatepost stone

While dowsing at Madron Baptistry this January with the West Cornwall Dowzers, Bart O'Farrell went exploring in the lane behind the Baptistry and found a gatepost stone (at SW4469 3285), which dowsed very strongly as a former standing stone. A few weeks later MM re-visited the stone, and WCD member Lana Jarvis found the stone, which indicated that the other, smaller gatepost stone was also part of the original standing stone, having been split off from it. When we examined both gateposts, we found that there were two sets of drill marks that matched up, indicating the stone was split at some point to make the two posts. Dowsing also revealed that the stone had originally stood in a field about 900 ft away, from where it was presumably dragged to its present position.



The next step was to try and find if there had been any record of the stone in the past. And here we had some success. Although the stone had not been recorded, its location had. An 1840 Tithe map revealed that a nearby field was called Longstone Field, a very strong indication that the gatepost stone(s) had originally been standing there. John Barnatt [*Prehistoric Cornwall, 1982*] gives a map reference for it at SW4462 3304, which nominally places it in the centre of that field, though we cannot be sure exactly where in the field it stood. The field would have been about 300m from the gatepost stones,



which is equivalent to the 900 or so feet that were dowsed. Robin Payne [*The Romance of the Stones, 1999*] also mentions it, calling it “missing Boswarthen menhir”, and comments that there are no traces of the stone there today. MM is delighted to prove him wrong, and to show that sometimes, even when a stone would appear to have completely disappeared, traces of it can still be found.

The original location of the stone in Longstone field places the stone not far from another standing stone, the stump of which still remains, at the entrance to Boswarthen farm [SW4427 3298]. Depending where in Longstone Field the stone originally stood, this would have formed an almost direct east-west alignment, which could have marked the rising and setting sun at the Spring and Autumn equinoxes. About half a mile north of these two stones, is the fine standing stone of Carfury (which itself may have had a companion, now fallen), so the whole area seems once to have been very rich in standing stones.



## C.A.S.P.N & LAN NEWS ROUND-UP

*Cornish Ancient Sites Protection Network*



There has been a change to one of the sessions for the 7th annual **Pathways to the Past** weekend on May 25th-26th. Sadly, one of the advertised speakers Roger Farnworth recently died [see p.17 of this MM], so his Sunday morning session has been replaced. The programme now consists of an opening walk on Saturday around the Treen & Bosporthenis prehistoric monuments, entitled *Curiouser and Curiouser!* with **Cheryl Straffon & Lana Jarvis**, to be followed by an afternoon *Stank around the Gump* with **David Giddings** on Chûn Downs. In the evening **Paul Bonnington** will give an illustrated talk on *Art of the Ancestors*, and on the Sunday morning there will be another talk by **Bart O'Farrell** on *Lines in the Landscape*. On the Sunday afternoon **Adrian Rodda** will do a walk visiting *Sanctuaries: a lan and a circle* (St.Buryan church & Boscawen-ûn circle), and the weekend finishes with a chat with **Craig Weatherhill** on *Place names of West Penwith*. Full details can be found on the CASPN website or by phoning 01736-787186.

Meanwhile CASPN has continued its work looking after the sites, with monthly clear-ups in West Penwith, and with LAN on the Lizard peninsula. So far this year CASPN has cleared up at Sancreed well (Jan), Madron well (Feb), Mulfra settlement (Mar), and Treen circle enclosure (Apr). Down on the Lizard, LAN revisited Croft Pascoe barrow in Feb for the first time in 3 years and cleared it again, and returned to Kynance Gate settlement in March, where the whole of the southern settlement is now cleared. Also in March, they had an extra clear-up at Polcoverack hut circle settlement [SW7738 1878], which has been badly overgrown for a number of years until Natural England did a preliminary cut down earlier this year, and opened it up for the first time in many years. Finally in April they went to another new site, a barrow to the north of Traboe crossroads [SW7379 2126]. Future clear-up dates are given on the Noticeboard on the back page.

### CORNISH ANCIENT SITES PROTECTION NETWORK [CASP.N]

**CASP.N Address:** Whitewaves, Boscaswell Village, Pendeen, Penzance, TR19 7EP

**Web site:** [www.cornishancientsites.com](http://www.cornishancientsites.com) **E-mail:** [secretary@cornishancientsites.com](mailto:secretary@cornishancientsites.com)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/groups](http://www.facebook.com/groups) [search for C.A.S.P.N]

### FRIENDS OF CORNWALL'S ANCIENT SITES [FOCAS]

**To join FOCAS** (£8/year waged- £5 unwaged) tel: FOCAS Administrator Eve Benney

07927 671612 or e-mail [focas@cornishancientsites.com](mailto:focas@cornishancientsites.com), visit CASPN web site for

downloadable application form, or write to: 11 Victoria Row, St.Just, Penzance TR19 7LG

**Adopt-a-Site scheme:** e-mail: [focas@cornishancientsites.com](mailto:focas@cornishancientsites.com)

**Sites Clear-Ups:** Dave Munday 01736-787230 e-mail: [dave@cornishancientsites.com](mailto:dave@cornishancientsites.com)

**Report damage at sites:** Tel: 01736-787186 or 01736-787522

**LIZARD ANCIENT SITES NETWORK [LAN]** via CASPN address (above)

**Adopt-a-Site scheme:** e-mail: [info@cornishancientsites.com](mailto:info@cornishancientsites.com), or phone 01736-787186

**Sites Clear-Ups:** Tel: 01736-787186 e-mail: [info@cornishancientsites.com](mailto:info@cornishancientsites.com)

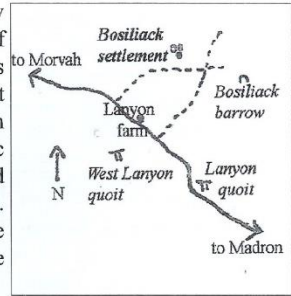




## HOME SWEET ANCIENT HOME

### WHERE OUR ANCESTORS LIVED 2: Bosiliack

Bosiliack settlement (SW428 344) is a lost and largely unknown prehistoric village that has a long continuity of occupation. It was first excavated in 1984 by Charles Thomas and his team, and then buried under bracken and gorse until it was cleared back and re-excavated in 2011. It lies to the north of Lanyon Farm, and is close to other prehistoric monuments, such as Bosiliack Barrow and Lanyon and West Lanyon quoits, all of which predate the settlement. So, when the first huts were built in the middle to late Bronze Age (1400-1000 BCE), Bosiliack barrow and the quoits were already the relics of *their* ancestors.



Soil samples taken during the 1984 excavation have been analysed and radiocarbon-dated. They show that the cleared upland landscape in the Bronze Age consisted of gorse, cherry, hazelnut and a little oak. The soils were poor, and were probably used for pastoralism (animals) rather than agriculture (crops). The site is dominated by Carn Gulva on the northern skyline, which had been a sacred tor enclosure in the late Neolithic/early Bronze Ages, and was clearly still of importance to these later Bronze Age peoples. One of the huts (no.3 - *photo right*) excavated in 2011 revealed that a large natural grounder (boulder) had been incorporated into the structure, which archaeologist David Giddings suggested was deliberate, and was a way for the settlement builders to “ground themselves into the earth” and “give reverence to the chthonic gods who were thought to dwell beneath the earth”.



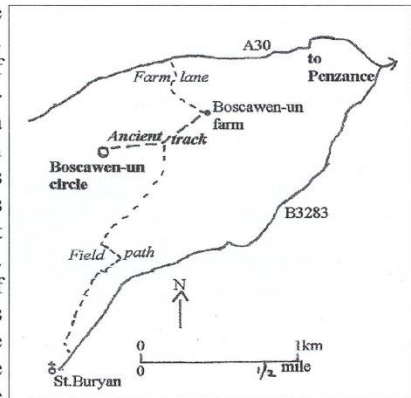
Although Bronze Age settlement sites are relatively rare in Cornwall, more are being identified nowadays, including Bodrifty, Sperris, Wicca and Trewey. Part of the problem is that they have often become overlaid by later Iron Age settlements, and that is certainly the case here at Bosiliack. When soil samples were taken in 1984, the radiocarbon dates revealed not only a Bronze Age date, but also an Iron Age date of 750-200 BCE. The remains of 14 roundhouses dating from that later period have been identified, most with entrances facing the south or south-west. It seems that the Iron Age people were very aware that these were the dwelling places of their ancestors, and built their houses on top of them. The huts average 6m (19½ft) in diameter, and of the 14, 11 were single huts, 2 were two-roomed huts, and 1 was three-roomed. This site shows a long period of occupation, and must have been a favourable and pleasant place to live.

## ANCIENT TRACKS

### 1: Boscawen-ûn farm to circle *by Raymond Cox*

*A new series that looks at some pathways to ancient sites in West Penwith that may be the tracks where our ancestors walked. Many of the old tracks exist as the old churchway paths connecting settlements to the parish churches, but parts of them, especially those with tall hedges may define old estate boundaries or are older than those. The deeply sunken tracks, especially those where the granite is prevalent are the essence and heart of this time-worn land, and where they pass alongside ancient monuments of any kind one can experience an enhancement of their arcane atmosphere, a subliminal reality.*

Part of this old pathway forms the church or field path from the village of St. Buryan to the hamlet (now the farm) of Boscawen-ûn. As the path approaches Boscawen-ûn farm, it crosses a stile to join a more enclosed ancient pathway [from SW4185 2760 to 4130 2735] that borders fields to reach the stone circle. This is perhaps the most atmospheric and secret approach to any of the region's stone circles. The hedge ends at the tall boundary hedge of the circle and the circle's central stone comes into view first of all, perfectly framed by the hedge. One then moves through the hedge into the large circular enclosure and the whole stone circle comes magically to view.



*Entering the stone circle from  
the ancient trackway*

This ancient track approaching the circle has an alignment along which it runs. From west to east it includes:

Missing stone [Bunkers Hill W] 4031 2719 /  
Boscawen-ûn stone circle 4122 2735 /  
Ancient track 413 274 to 418 275 /  
Trenuggo cross 4278 2764 /  
Tresvennack Pillar menhir 4418 2788

*This pathway from St. Buryan to the ancient track leading to Boscawen-ûn circle will be walked as part of the Pathways to the Past weekend on Sunday May 26th with Adrian Rodda. Meet at St. Buryan church at 2pm on that day. All welcome.*

# Penwith Pagan Moot



## PAGAN PAGES

by **Eve Salthouse**

The Moot met at Sancreed Village Hall this year for our **Samhain** celebration, as Sancreed House is now sadly in new ownership. For those intrepid souls who have for many years looked forward to adventuring into the dark to brave the mud and undergrowth to celebrate beside the fire pit, it was a very different celebration with the change of venue. But for those less able to withstand the physical challenges of wintry mud and cold, it was an opportunity to fully participate in a Samhain ritual. In many traditions, Samhain is considered the New Year. It is also believed to be the time of the year when the veil between the worlds is at it's thinnest, when the souls of the dead can cross over. In some parts of the country, this is the night when the Wild Hunt rides; in other traditions it is the court of the Sidhe, the Fair folk, who ride forth from their faerie mounds. It is All Hallows Eve, which has metamorphosed in modern culture into Halloween. In line with these traditions, we remembered and honoured our beloved dead, using the fragile light of individual candles to focus our thoughts on the beauty and fragility of life, light burning brightly in the darkness.

With the ritual planning group getting ever smaller, the decision was sadly taken not to hold a Yule ritual, the first time this Solstice celebration has not been held by the Moot in over ten years. However, with the first signs of the returning spring, our energy returned and we celebrated **Imbolc**, as has become traditional for our Moot, by walking to Sancreed Holy Well, looking beautiful as always after the loving attentions of the CASPN volunteers at our annual clear up the previous month. Although muddy, the path was clear of brambles and fringed with fat pink sycamore buds and dark glossy ivy. We were encouraged to see a good level of water in the well, and beautiful clouties swinging in the weak spring sunshine. Imbolc is celebrated as the time when the Cailleach, the Crone of the Old Year, is reborn as the Maiden. She is honoured by many names: Bride, Bridie, Brigit, Brighid. She was held to be the patron goddess of healing, poetry and smithcraft, (in modern terms, creativity), and as such, following our walk to the Well and a blessing from the water, the Moot celebrated her festival at Sancreed Village Hall with poetry and reflections on our personal creative projects.

The Moot celebrates the eight seasonal festivals of the year and our seasonal celebrations are open to all. In the warmer months they are held at some of our many beautiful ancient sites. All are very welcome to come along, either to join in or even just to see what it is we do. For more details, please see the contact details on the back page. The Moot also meets monthly, on the second Tuesday, in the upstairs function room of the Admiral Benbow Inn in Penzance. At Moots we have a variety of activities: discussion evenings, guest speakers, workshops, as well as catching up on local news and events. All are very welcome to attend.

**PAGAN PAGES**  
**ASHLAND GODDESS SANCTUARY**

A new Goddess sanctuary is being created in north Cornwall, nor far from Bude. With the help of Graell Corsini from the Ashland Goddess Sanctuary in Oregon, USA, the Cornish sanctuary is being established on land owned locally by the Ash family. 93 year old Joy Ash had a vision that the land should be dedicated to the healing of women, and so her son David is overseeing the work, which so far has consisted of the creation of a sacred pond, a stone circle and a lower area dedicated to the elementals. Crystals, feathers, holy waters, leaves, sacred symbols, holy nectars, stones, soil and more were placed beneath each stone of the 8-stone circle, with a smaller stone marking the central energy vortex. It is intended that the land should be available for Goddess Gatherings, retreats, sacred dance & music, and for private bookings for personal healing and meditation. Inexpensive accommodation is also available nearby. To visit or for bookings contact davidash333@btinternet.com or phone 07792387291.



**GODDESS IN CORNWALL 2013**

The Goddess in Cornwall event, Cornwall’s premiere spiritual event for women, which has run successfully for over 6 years, is back again this year at Boswedden House near St.Just. Running from Sept 3rd-8th there is a cornucopia of workshops, ceremonies and entertainment. Further details can be found at [www.goddessincornwall.co.uk](http://www.goddessincornwall.co.uk).



**WELLS**  
**CORNER**

*A new regular feature on Cornwall's holy wells*



**Tregellast well [SW5184 3440].**

MM’s attention was recently drawn to a well not known to us before. On the Holywells of Cornwall Facebook page, Jonathan Polkest posted a photo of Tregellast well, which lies in the middle of a crossroads near Cockwells, just off the A30 road between Penzance and St.Erth. There is no mention of it in Meyrick’s book on holy wells, and no trace of a chapel nearby, so presumably it is a utilitarian rather than a holy well. But its location, right in the centre of a crossroads, is interesting, and it also lies not far from the famous Collurian well [SW523 347], a holy well famed for the cure of eye troubles. Tregellast was restored by Ludgvan OCS in 2002, but its surface is now covered by moss, which hides the fresh water beneath.

*[www.facebook.com/groups/holywells\\_of\\_Cornwall](http://www.facebook.com/groups/holywells_of_Cornwall)*

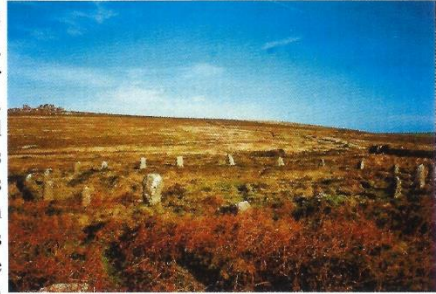
*IN-  
SITE*

The centre-page feature that focusses on one or more particular sites each time in depth.

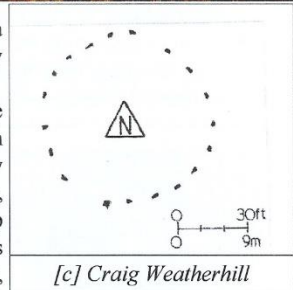
As a lead-in to the article on p.14-16 this one looks at

**TREGESAL CIRCLE & NEARBY SITES**

**Tregesal stone circle** [SW 3866 3238] lies to the south of Carn Kenidjack, a strangely-shaped rocky outcrop/tor enclosure on the moors near to St.Just, associated with legends of the dead and supernatural beings, as well as anomalous earth-lights. The circle now has 19 stones standing, though it was much disturbed in the past. Most were re-erected in the 1920s by 'persons unknown' and some in the 1980s. The stones range in height from 0.8m (2½ft) to 1.5m (5ft) and are equally spaced with a gap in the south-western side, but a former quarry encroaches on its western flank.



There was formerly a second circle due west of the extant one at 3861 3237 which was destroyed in the 19th & early 20th centuries, although some stones are now incorporated in the Cornish hedge. Also a third circle, again due west at 3857 3257, has been identified from crop marks, but this may have been a cairn circle. There was originally a great concentration of circles, barrows, enclosures and other monuments on Tregesal Common .



[c] Craig Weatherhill

This area of the Common is rich with legends of the Otherworld: fairy folk, demons and devils. One story tells of how a local miner chanced upon a Fairy Feast at the circle and was bound in gossamer thread and left there all night; another tells of an encounter with the Devil himself on Carn Kenidjack, which dominates the horizon from the circle; and yet another tells of Pee Tregear who was piskey-led here and encountered the little folk. All these stories may be memories of the ancestors and spirits of the dead in this ancient area. It seems likely that Tregesal Circle, along with other stone circles in the area, was a place of ceremony and ritual. Together with its twin (or triple) circles, it was probably originally the centre of a whole area of ritual monuments, perhaps all focussed on the distinctive shape of Carn Kenidjack that overlooks the moor. It is known that Carn Kenidjack was a Tor Enclosure, which means that it was used as well, perhaps as a separate sacred area. It was probably thought of as the dwelling place of the ancestors or the Gods/Goddesses, and there may have been a ceremonial path from the circle(s) to the Tor Enclosure.

## OTHER SITES NEAR TO TREGESEAL CIRCLE

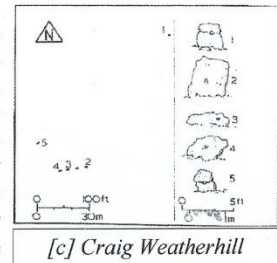
### Tregeseal Barrows

North of the stone circle there are a number of round barrows, which can be found by taking the path from the stone circle towards Carn Kenidjack and after about 100 yards bearing right (NE) along a smaller path. The barrows will be visible ahead, and the path runs between two of the best preserved of them. The two best preserved barrows are 12.2m (40ft) & 14m (46ft) in diameter, and both about 1.5m (5ft) high. One of them (SW 3887 3255) has part of its kerb remaining and may have held a cist (burial urn). The other (SW 3891 3258) still has the remains of a stone chamber, which may have been an entrance grave. There is also another well-preserved barrow to the south at Hailglower Farm (SW 3852 3210). All these barrows were part of a funerary complex, and probably held the remains of the dead ancestors of the people who built the stone circle(s).

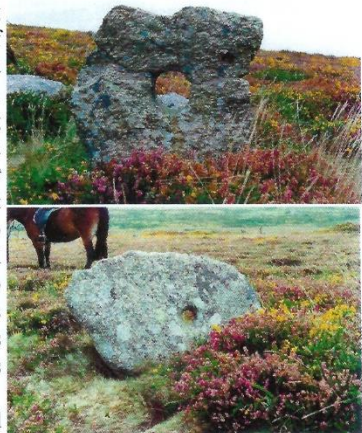
### Holed stones

Continue along this minor path past the barrows and after a few yards you will come to the Tregeseal Holed Stones [SW 3895 3255]. These stones are something of an enigma. It is presumed that they are contemporary (late Neolithic-early Bronze Age) with all the other monuments in the area, such as the stone circle(s) and barrows, but their function and purpose is not clear. There have been re-erected within living memory and may not now be in their original positions, nor have they all been re-erected the correct way round. They are all about 0.8m (2½ft) to 1.2m (4ft) high, and all have holes of varying diameters, but mostly quite small. There are three of them standing (plus a fragment of one fallen) in a line, marked as nos. 2, 3 & 4 on the above plan. No.2 (*photo right above*) has the largest hole, being 9cm (3½in) in diameter, large enough to pass a hand through. No.3 has fallen, and no.4 (*photo right below*) has been put back up at right angles. About 20 yds to the NW is another one (no.5 on the plan) with a horizontal fracture, that was recently repaired and re-erected by HES. Finally, about 100 yds up the hillside to the NE is another one, which has fallen. It may not belong to the same sequence as the others, though its proximity to them is curious to say the least.

The stones may have originally been aligned to view a significant landscape feature, such as a nearby barrow, or Carn Kenidjack, or Boswens menhir, the tip of which is visible on the far eastern horizon.



[c] Craig Weatherhill



## **PERFORMANCE AND JOURNEYING: RITUALS AT CORNISH SITES IN THE 1970'S**

by **Jill Smith**

*Towards the end of 2012, the Newlyn Art Gallery presented an exhibition of the work of Bruce Lacey at the Exchange in Penzance. This was a retrospective look at the creations and installations of this eccentric artist, whose connections to Cornwall were through the performance art that he and his then wife Jill Bruce did at some ancient sites in West Penwith in the 1970s. These performances were an early version of what became rituals and ceremonies that worked with and honoured the spirits of the land. Jill Bruce is now Jill Smith, an artist and writer who returned to Cornwall in 1994 to give a talk to CEMG called "Whispers from the Edge", and wrote about her journey from West Penwith to the Hebrides in an article for MM26 (p.19-21). Here, especially for MM, she writes about the rituals and ceremonies that she and Bruce Lacey did at the ancient sites in Cornwall and elsewhere, all those 35 or so years ago.*

In those days I was known as Jill Bruce, had been in a relationship with Bruce since 1960 and married to him since 1967. We began working together as a Performance Art duo in the early '70s, initially putting on multi-media science fantasy productions but our work gradually evolved into outdoor, non-electric, celebratory, ceremonial, ritual performances, especially at the East Anglian (Albion) fairs.

We had 'discovered' Neolithic and Bronze Age sites in the '60s but at that time there seemed to be no way of integrating the effect they had on us into our working lives. Personally, I had experienced Neolithic and more ancient ancestors rising from the rolling hills of Wiltshire and calling out to me that they were wise, not the wild savages my school education had taught me everything before the Romans had been, and that it was my role in life to help others to realise this too. I had other psychic memories on Windmill Hill above Avebury as well. These were very new and unusual experiences for me and were perhaps the beginnings of the direction in which my life later went. When we began the ritual performances I had no idea it was the first step onto a path of self-initiation into my 'woman magic' or indeed that I was on any path at all.

As well as the public shows we began to go off in our yellow 3 ton ex-GPO truck to visit and journey between many ancient sites in different parts of the British Isles. On one hand we were discovering these sites for ourselves, but began to feel that we were journeying ancient paths and re-linking sites as we felt our ancient ancestors had done; in a way re-awakening ancient British 'dreaming paths'. It was a germ of a concept then, not fully developed, but it later became a way of life for me when, no longer with Bruce, I made great landscape journeys, much on foot, throughout the British Isles. We had the sense that places were not isolated 'sites', but part of a living sacred landscape (something archaeologists have begun to realise in recent years) and that the life and energy of the land needed to be tended by the interaction with humans.



My understanding of this was much deepened when I spent a month at Uluru in Australia in 1984, and felt then that humans were the link between earth and cosmos, macrocosm and microcosm, and that by journeying between and re-linking sites one was keeping something well. And ourselves well also perhaps. At that time very few people were working with ancient sites in this way nor doing our kind of ritual performances, something which is perhaps more common now.

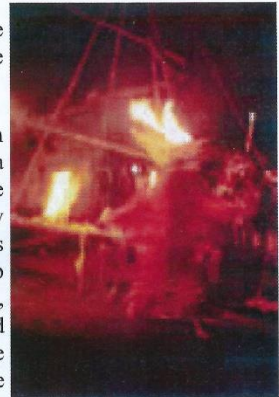
In those days we didn't walk between sites but travelled in our truck, carrying lots of props and costumes. When we arrived at a site we would spend some time getting the feel of the place and what we felt we needed to do there. We didn't pre-plan things beforehand although there were similarities between things we did at different sites.

I always collected sacred well water or water from other sacred sources (I still do). In particular I always carried with me water from Chalice Well in Glastonbury, treasured as I now treasure water from Brighde's well on the Isle of Lewis. When Bruce and I moved from London to East Anglia to a house with no piped water, I felt the water from our own garden well had an element of sacredness. I often felt I wanted to give some of these waters to other sites, as a gift, as a kind of anointing, as a link between the well and the site we were at. It was a kind of life-force, a keeping-alive of something vital. Sometimes I would walk round a stone circle giving a little water to each stone, sometimes we would 'anoint' a stone more ritualistically.

We always carried a flame which had been lit from the sun (as with the recent Olympic flames) and often at a site at sunrise I would carry this flame in a flask round the stones of a circle, weaving patterns of energy by my walking. It was to honour the rising sun and the life it gives to all on earth and also to acknowledge the relationship between sun and circle. Sometimes we were more theatrical, lighting torches of hay or straw from the fire source and walking great flaring patterns around the stones. We were always extremely careful to damage nothing nor to leave anything at a site. On our Cornish journey I particularly remember working in this way at Boscawen-un, Tregeseal and the Nine Maidens circle at Boskednan.



*Dawn ceremony,  
Stone circle in Cornwall, 1978*



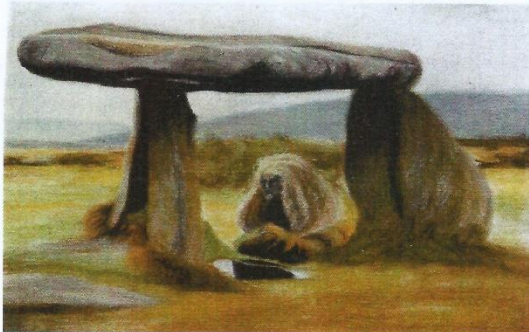
*Fire performance at  
Cornish fair in mid-70s*

On one visit to the Cheesewring on Bodmin Moor we took a small stone back to an East Anglian fair to become part of a 'Mercurial Harp'. I can assure people it was returned afterwards! I would never do such a thing now. Boscawen-ûn especially had a profound effect on me and it was from there that I began my 'Awakening' journey between sacred sites throughout the country to eventually arrive for the first time at Callanish on the Isle of Lewis in 1982.

When working with Bruce we were funded as Performance Artists by the then Arts Council of Great Britain, so we had to document our sacred site journeys. We used to carry out our rituals 'for real' and then re-create them for either still photographs or cine film (the cameras being on automatic). The documentation was then exhibited on the gallery walls in our later exhibitions with some explanation of what we had been doing. I think the Cornish journey was part of one exhibition at the Acme Gallery in Covent Garden. So, our rituals had a serious intent, being a way of 'harmonising' ourselves with the site; of linking the sites into a living sacred landscape and of honouring the place itself.

My understanding of what I was doing deepened with time as I reached a more profound connection with ancient ancestors, ancestral spirits, guardians of place etc. I got to the point where I no longer needed costumes nor the concept of performance into my relating to ancient sites. I moved out on my own into larger landscape journeys and then, when I lived on the Isle of Lewis, into marking the cycle of the year at the sacred places up here: a different form of journey. My ritual work became externally smaller, but richer, deeper and much more potent. It became my way of life for many years and underlies and supports my experience of reality now, even though I may currently be doing fewer or different forms of landscape journeying. I am deeply grateful to the sites of Cornwall for the part they played in my spiritual awakening in the '70s and they lie still in my 'internal map' forged during that life-changing journey which began at Boscawen-ûn in 1982.

*All photos & artwork [c] Jill Smith. Jill is the author of 'The Callanish Dance' [Capall Bann, 2000] and 'Mother of the Isles' [Dor Dama Press, 2003].*



*Web site: [www.jill-smith.co.uk](http://www.jill-smith.co.uk).*

*Jill is currently working on a book about all the landscape journeying she did in the early '80s after her partnership with Bruce Lacey had ended.*

*Artwork - Hag/Crone at Lanyon Quoit [c] Jill Smith*

## FOGOUS AND TRANSFORMATION

by Roger Farnworth

*Roger Farnworth sadly and unexpectedly died from lymphoma at the end of January this year. Roger was an original thinker and researcher of Cornwall's ancient sites, and was a member of the Cornwall Archaeological Society, to whom he gave a talk in November 2012 on "Platform Cairns and the winter solstice alignments on Rough Tor", a talk that he was planning to write up for Meyn Mamvro. He was a MM subscriber and contributor, and was particularly interested in alignments and other kinds of 'alternative archaeology'. He wrote a two-part article on "Sighlines to the Tors and Stars" in MM63 & 64, in which he examined the relationship of the Hurlers stone circle on Bodmin Moor to the prehistoric pole star Thubon, and the 'view frames' that he believed were deliberately created amongst the tor rocks to highlight significant features in the Bodmin Moor landscape. As interesting as these ideas were for MM readers, his lively mind extended in many other directions, and he had completed two original articles for MM, one on an idea about the use of fogous, and a longer piece on the significance of cliff castles (that he was due to talk about at Pathways to the Past in May this year). MM will be publishing both of these articles, and for this issue we start with his ideas on a possible use of fogous.*

An adequate explanation of fogous must account for each of the many features which they have in common. These characteristics were necessary for them to function as practical or ritual structures. As the areas in which they are found are limited to Penwith and the Helford areas, that function must relate to the resources of where they are today. I suggest that each fogou was a tool for the extraction of a resource whose profit was proportional to the labour cost of fogou construction. If so, the wealth generated should be reflected in the lifestyle quality of the accompanying settlements. Previous explanations in terms of food storage or defence make use of only one feature of some fogous, i.e. that some are underground. Storage of beer or milk would not require such a large structure. Self incarceration in a well known chamber in order to escape enemies would have been a fatal policy. Only by looking at function and structure can ritual use be revealed.

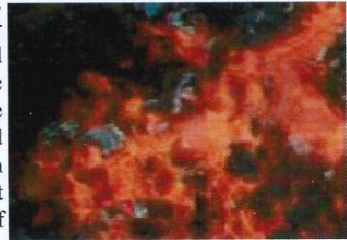
The common features that must be explained are as follows. Entrances and exits face in a variety of directions but one always faces the prevailing wind. From this entrance made for wind, the passage veers to the right and there is a rise of ground level. Each has a 'creep' and it is of a similar size. When Carn Euny was excavated charcoal rich sediment was found and there were signs of burning and heat cracked stones. Fogous are found neither at the top of the hill or at its base but towards the top after a geologically long smooth rise. Round pebbles from the sea shore are often found. All these features can be related to two functions, the first being the essential precursor of the second, namely the making of charcoal and the subsequent smelting of tin. The transformation of rock into metal into wealth through the element of fire on a scale never before witnessed may have been perceived as a ritual act which at Boleigh may have been envisaged as the work of an appropriate god.

The round fogou at Carn Euny is the earliest. Though skilfully corbelled it is a primitive single stage charcoal smelter. The inner chamber has the proportions of a charcoal burner's mound, its diameter being twice the height. After the wood was lit air could be gradually decreased by blocking the entrance and damping down the top chimney with ferns; this turns the carbon dioxide in the wood to monoxide. The charcoal is now capable of creating a slow rise to great heat. Streamed tin bearing stones could be placed in the hottest place, the recess opposite the entrance where tin and slag would separate after many hours of rising temperature. Hitherto the recess and top hole have never been explained.



*Corbelled chamber at Carn Euny*

Beside the round fifth century fogou is a later, separate and streamlined version that would have reached much greater temperatures very rapidly because it could capture abundant oxygen fuelled wind during a gale. This 20 m passage through which you can walk upright, could make a huge quantity of charcoal when the entrance and exit were closed. The air control duct, which was the 'creep' technology, could be used to close off air gradually or increase air flow if the fire got too low. The exit could subsequently be filled with a great quantity of tin ore perhaps placed on those round pebbles found at some fogou sites through which molten tin could flow and be separated from slag. When the ore had been pounded and placed behind the charcoal, the greatest gale of the season would be awaited. The inhabitant of the neighbouring house told me that gales blowing unimpeded up the south west slope could reach force eleven, over 100 miles an hour. Hedges may have funnelled the wind into the fogou. When the charcoal was lit, the right turn in the passage and the rise in floor level would create chaotic turbulence capable of rapidly reaching all the ore to be smelted. The brightness of the flame, the roaring of the furnace and the irresistible power of the heat would be the most potent earth magic of the elements of fire, air and earthrock. Awe at the energy released would induce religious experience. The outcome of the fire ritual would be wealth that could draw traders across the seas to barter exotic goods. The tin that hardened copper made armies invincible.

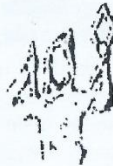


Patricia Christie's excavation report on Carn Euny fogou noted that at the east entrance she uncovered "a black sticky layer of charcoal" that reached a maximum of one metre. Similar deposits should perhaps be sought and carbon dated at all fogous. Christie also excavated the courtyard house settlement around the fogous. Like Chysauster, which also has a fogou, the housing is of far higher status than in settlements without fogous,

suggesting their wealth generating use. At Pendeen Vau on the north coast, the owner told me the prevailing north westerly gales “don’t blow round you but through you”. Wind rises from the sea up a smooth slope to confront an ancient wall in which the fogou is situated. The gale would be sucked through the small entrance on the seaward side by the low pressure behind the wall. The right turn on rising ground and a rab cut creep are evident. At Boscaswell fogou the same combination of smooth slope up from the sea, an ancient wall creating a low pressure chamber and a creep suggest the same technical variant of smelting. At Halligye Fogou there are two passages near the crest of a hill that has smooth unencumbered sloping terrain on two sides. One fogou passage opens to the north west and the other to the south west. Thus the operators of wind-driven smelting would have had choice of which fogou to use when wind was blowing at gale force from either direction. There is a narrow central stone doorway which connects the two passages. At this point either passage could be closed off. This central doorway was made of smoothly dressed stone. Subsequent to its installation it became deeply marked by heat melting the ore within the stone. Deformations due to heat occur in many of the corbelled stones and dark fire marks blacken the roof slabs.

Boleigh faces south west and is now becalmed in trees, but would once have received the south westerlies funnelled up the Lamorna valley. Hedgerows now criss cross the rising ground to the south west which would once have been a smooth slope up from the sea. If Boleigh fogou did once roar and thunder within a transformational fiery furnace the appropriate god to carve on the entrance would have been Jupiter. In his Celtic conflated form Taranus, he was often depicted with a stick of thunderbolt in one upraised hand and metal work in the other. This is remarkably similar to the indistinct carving at the south east entrance. Taranus also had a beard and rim of hair round his face looking like a hood.

*Carving at Boleigh fogou entrance (near right)  
and the Celtic God Taranus (far right).*



The use of fogous as described above would take place over a short period of the year, after the farmwork perhaps, in the autumn. Firstly the charcoal would be made and as a second process, when a gale comes, all the years' streamed ore would be smelted at once on one day. That would leave more than three quarters of the year to use for other activities. After the god had swept through at gale force with consuming fire raising havoc and transformation, these fire rites would have changed the fogou into a sacred space for rites of passage from youth initiation to perhaps cremation. Also, liminal contact with the underworld would have made ceremonies to acknowledge the entry of solstice light appropriate. The fogous would become the most sacred place within settlements and the settlements would consist of the most sophisticated and wealthiest houses in the region.

## MONTOL & GOLOWAN UPDATE

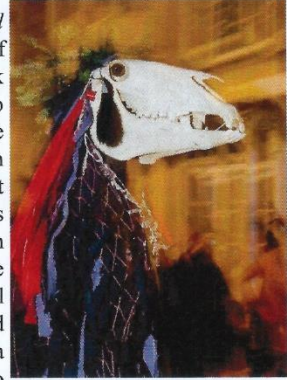
Penzance's midwinter festival Montol continues to cause controversy. In MM68 p.8 - 9 we reported that with the retirement of the original Penglaze, two new Osses were created, one by the original teaser Cassandra Latham-Jones and her supporters, and the other by the Golowan & Montol Committee. Subsequently we reported [*in MM76 p.23 - "A Tale of Two Osses"*] that in December 2010, the new director of Golowan & Montol Andy Hazlehurst banned the Latham-Jones 'Oss which was subsequently re-shaped and re-named as Penkeyyll, and now visits other Events in Cornwall and beyond, as part of a Boekka Morris side. Meanwhile, the Montol Committee decided to dispense with Penglaze altogether at Montol, much to the disappointment of many, who had always enjoyed the dark and edgy feel of the reborn Oss at Montol. In protest at this turn of events, one of the original Golowan & Montol organising team, Simon Reed (now no longer part of the Festival), made a satirical mock Oss from old brooms, crap wood and old flags, and named him Pencrap! He brought him along to Montol 2012 [*photo above*], much to some people's puzzlement!



*Simon Reed's Pencrap "Oss" at Montol 2012. Photo [c] Alex Langstone*

Both Golowan and Montol have, under their new Director and organising team, distanced themselves from any pre-Christian or pagan elements of the festivals, and the result is what has been described as a "weak, watered-down version" of the original revived festivals, lacking the power and wildness of the original 'Oss and its teaser. Simon Reed has talked about the core themes that were set out by him and the original organising team: these include darkness, mockery, customs unique to Cornwall and based on sound research, participation not limited to strict parade lists like other festivals but open to all, misrule, topsy turvey, and creating ability to do the event without money in a spontaneous manner. Any sense of people sanctioning things, one way or the other, was an anathema to the spirit of the Events. The new organisers appear not to have understood this, or else have deliberately suppressed or eliminated these elements. The result is that they have virtually killed off the meaning and energy of the revived Montol. The current Montol organiser Helen Musser, was quoted as saying that in future an indoor "cabaret" could be the central focus as a "family event", which might then take to the streets "if the weather was good enough". Not only has Montol been watered down, but the midsummer Festival Golowan has also suffered under the new management. Penglaze now only makes one appearance, on Mazey Day eve, and his dancing, and crowd participation, is strictly controlled. The Serpent Dance on Mazey Day that ran through the streets, now has no 'Oss to lead it, and just peters out at the end. What was originally an exciting, on-the-edge and slightly anarchic Event, is in danger of becoming one more 'civic Festival' like countless others.

Simon Reed has talked [in *“The Cornish Traditional Year” Troy Books, 2nd edition, 2012*] about the revival of ancient customs in Cornwall as “all those who wish to break the drudgery of saccharine ladled celebrations that try to commercialise our everyday existence in Cornwall”. He elaborated on this on the Cornish Folklore page on Facebook in December 2012: “I would strongly state that Montol is not an ‘event’ but an interpretation of themes from the past (recent and very deep past); the impression must not be given that An Vontol (The Midwinter) can be controlled in one town or place or that peoples’ personal views of it can be stated to be wrong. ALL of Cornwall did Guise dancing and it would be perfectly legit to create a beast (our ancestors made new ones very regularly) and do something different in a different community. I am working on an idea for an event in Redruth for example, not the same by any means and not public knowledge yet. All you need to do is: 1) Create a ritual based on good research. 2) Get the community on board - create a coalition of people who like the idea. 3) Do it! St Just had a similar event (Nickanan Night where an ‘Oss identical to Penkevyll went door to door), Redruth had a Wassel on Chewidden Thursday (first clear Thursday before Christmas) and so on and on and on. 4) Do not do tradition for traditions sake, do it because it brings people together, makes the community stronger in the process and makes people happy. If it doesn’t make people happy and it becomes a point of contention, SPLIT like they did in Padstow or spread the greatness of our heritage to new people elsewhere.



*Penglaz at Montol 2007.  
Photo [c] Jane Cox*



*Montol photo-composite [c] Jane Cox*

### **HISTORIC PADSTOW OBBY OSS FILM CLIP**

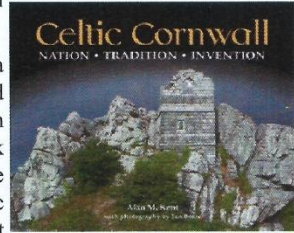
An historic film clip of Padstow’s Obby Oss, taken in 1930 is available for viewing at [www.britishpathe.com](http://www.britishpathe.com) (search ‘summer is y.... comen in’). Although the clip is only 40 sec long and has no sound it is very interesting, as it shows a very different Obby Oss event to today’s. The teaser is a man dressed as a woman, and the musicians are a small group of men also dressed up in costume. Julie Cruddace from Padstow has suggested that the film shows Old Mac MacOwen who was known to cross-dress as teaser. The musicians shown could have been representing the characters Signor Brentano, Colonel de Bato, Don Carlos de Bato, Trevathen Red and Lively Mac, referred to in a book by Herbert Kille published in 1935 [see *MM48 p.20*]. Interestingly another clip from 1932, only 2 years later, shows none of this, and the Oss, teaser and musicians look much like they do today.

## BOOK REVIEWS & NEWS

**Celtic Cornwall: Nation, Tradition, Invention** by Alan M. Kent [Halsgrove, 2012. Hbk £24.99]

This is a superb book: beautifully produced, with a knowledgeable text by Cornish writer Alan Kent, and accompanied by some stunning colour photographs by Jan Beare, as well as reproductions of old prints. The book attempts to do something new and different - to show the wealth and breadth of Cornish culture from prehistoric times to the present day, and in particular what makes it different and special. There are 500 entries arranged by district and then by category, consisting of holy wells; playing places and theatres; hill forts, cliff castles, enclosures, field systems, fogous, round houses and courtyard houses; stones and Celtic crosses; Cornish language, Cornish literature, Anglo-Saxon literature and history; Arthuriana and Tristana; the lives of the Saints; folklore and legend; sport and music; and contemporary features. Each entry gives an OS map reference and details of how to get to the site, followed by a description of the site and its significance. This is a large 'coffee-table' type book, so not one for carrying around or slipping into a backpack, but as a reference book it is a delight. There was so much I learnt from dipping into the book, and Alan Kent's research cannot be faulted or bettered. The variety of information is astounding. To take just one random example: turn to the entries for Camborne and Redruth and you get: Nine Maidens Down cross, Caldavnack roundhouse settlement, *Bewnans Meriasek*, crosses and Celtic heritage, Plain-an-Gwarry, Great Flat Lode trail, Treslothan cross, and so on. Every part of Cornwall has a delightful cornucopia of entries from ancient sites to old customs to historical events to Cornish writings and drama. Alan Kent says of it: "This volume is a hand on the pulse of what makes Celtic Cornwall tick, but inevitably also the tip of a vast iceberg", and he has done Cornwall a great service by tapping into that Celtic culture.

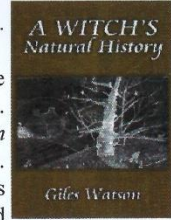
His interesting Introduction to the book also gives much food for thought. He raises the issue of what makes Cornwall Celtic, and says: "The fact that Cornwall continues to recognise its Celticity (the values and ideology that make a people Celtic) shows its tenacity and drive to make the world aware of its heritage. Potentially, the fact that it has not had 'nation' status has paradoxically heightened its Celticity". He goes on to give a succinct background to the story of what made Cornwall 'Celtic': this is no whimsical romanticised view of Celtic Cornwall, but a view that is infused and enhanced by his knowledge of present-day research and interpretations. "Contemporary Cornwall is very aware of its Celtic past, present and future. It is able to work as a cultural magpie, picking and choosing what aspects of its past it wishes to preserve. Invariably, present Celtic Cornwall is based on new readings of the past colluding and colliding with the needs of the present. We should therefore expect fusion, borrowings and hybridisations - actually in just the same way that the past operated". Alan Kent teases out these strands of themes and traditions, the warp that makes up the web of a Cornwall rich in ancient history and yet recreated anew for the present day. No writer or researcher could have done more.





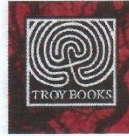
**A Witch's Natural History** by **Giles Watson** [Troy Books, 2013.  
Pbk £11.99 Hbk £18.99 [www.troybooks.co.uk](http://www.troybooks.co.uk)]

Giles Watson lived for a while on the Isles of Scilly, from where he contributed a regular column to MM ['View from the Islands' nos. 55-60]. He also subsequently wrote a series of essays for *The Cauldron* magazine on aspects of nature and traditional 'wise woman' witchcraft. It is these essays that have been reprinted in this book, which explores the lore, legends and life-histories of a number of animals, birds and plants which are commonly employed as motifs in the history of witchcraft. These include reptiles, amphibians, crows, rats, spiders, insects, slugs, snails, and cryptogams (spore-bearing plants). Giles knows his natural world, and there is a lot to learn in this book about the habits and habitats of many creatures who live very close to us, as well as their significance in traditional witchcraft. Very often the creatures he writes about are much maligned, hated or feared by humankind, but this book 'reclaims' them and asks for our understanding, tolerance and respect for these creatures of the Goddess. The last few chapters of the book combine all this knowledge into four imaginary rambles that we could all undertake, revealing the complex ecosystems that lie all around us: 'Through the Lychgate', 'The witch by the hedge', 'The witch by moor and wood and shore', and 'Beyond the crooked stile'. This is an unusual book, but one that will be of interest to anyone (witch or not) who is interested in natural history and its impact on folkloric beliefs and practices.



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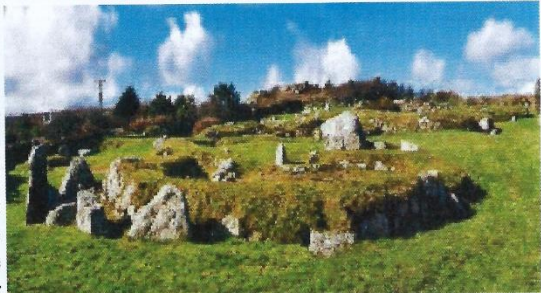
## 20 YEARS AGO

*Delving into the pages of MM from the past*

MM21 (Summer 1993) took a look at some strange phenomena at ancient sites (which of course it continues to do). One reader, Jackie Sutton, contacted us about a “close encounter at Carn Euny” and this is what she had to say:

“My fiancé and I enjoyed a wonderful holiday in St. Just last year. We chose Cornwall to explore umpteen Celtic/Pagan sites, but went to the areas open-minded, not with preconceived ideas. One hot day we visited Carn Euny fogou. After having explored it, my boyfriend decided to cool off in the fogou itself. I myself couldn't go in: it wasn't an unpleasant feeling, I just knew that I *shouldn't* go in at *that* particular time. So instead I propped against what I took to be a window sill, and started to sketch the entrance. Immediately I knew I was being watched from behind. I didn't turn round, carried on drawing, and let what would happen happen. How I knew what I saw/felt I don't know, but I know that the mother of the house had been preparing some food, and came to the 'window' to see who was there. She had with her her little girl who asked her mother what I was doing. The mother then picked her up, so she could see. I dared not turn round for fear of losing 'contact'. On completion, I called my boyfriend, who was ready to leave. He felt nothing, or saw nothing. But again as we left the village I had the pleasant feeling of saying goodbye to a friendly community”.

What Jackie seems to have experienced was some kind of 'time shift' or 'altered state of consciousness', perhaps exacerbated by her sketching, which is a creative act that sometimes leads to such a state. The interesting thing is that over the twenty years since then, many other people have independently reported a similar connection to the prehistoric ancestors who lived in this



*Carn Euny settlement - place of the ancestors*

courtyard house settlement some 2000 or so years ago. Sometimes this manifests as a 'vision' but more often as a feeling of great peace and welcome there. Some people have described hearing voices, others a strong sense of being watched over by friendly people from the past or the spirit world. Carn Euny appears to be some kind of 'portal' providing a short cut between this world and the world of the ancestors. One pagan group, who have used the fogou regularly for their Samhain ritual now for some 20 years, speak of its power as an interface between this world and the Other World. Jackie Sutton's innocent encounter with the original inhabitants of the site would seem to be part of a pattern of 'close encounters' experienced most strongly at Carn Euny.

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*Wed May 1st 5am* - Jack in the Green with Penkvyl Oss. Chapel Carn Brea

*Wed May 1st* - Obby Oss Day at

Padstow. Details: 01841-533449

Web site: [www.padstow.com](http://www.padstow.com)

*Sun May 5th* - 25th Three Wells Walk

Meet Sancreed Church 10.15am or

Well 1pm. Details: 01736-787186

*Wed May 8th* - Helston Flora Day +

Hal-an-Tow Web site:

[www.helstonfloraday.org.uk](http://www.helstonfloraday.org.uk)

*Sun June 23rd* - Midsummer Bonfires

on Chapel Carn Brea & other selected hilltops organised by OldCornwallSoc

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*June 9th* - Boscawen-ün circle

*Sun July 14th* - Nine Maidens barrows

*Sun Aug 18th* - Tregeseal stone circle

Dave Munday 01736-787230 E-mail:

[dave@cornishancientsites.com](mailto:dave@cornishancientsites.com)

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*Tue May 14th* - Poldowrian hut circle

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